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Letter dated 21 July 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I am writing to you with regard to the Arria Formula meeting on Gaza. While Israel attaches great importance to the humanitarian situation in Gaza, it is evident that the sole purpose of that meeting is a political one. If the meeting was truly about helping the people of Gaza, it would be about who is playing a constructive role in Gaza, and who is playing a destructive role.

Israel is fully committed to the implementation of the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism and will continue to cooperate with the United Nations in that important mission. Since October 2014, 1.3 million tons of construction materials have been supplied to Gaza from Israel. Hundreds of trucks enter Gaza every day, carrying thousands of tons of food, humanitarian aid, medicines and other supplies, all without any restrictions. A total of 1.6 million tons of goods, in 53,000 trucks, already entered Gaza in the first half of 2015.

While quick to condemn Israel at the United Nations, on the ground, the Palestinian Authority refuses to assume responsibility for the people of Gaza. The Palestinian Authority has no authority over the Gaza Strip and, apparently, does not want any. Last September, when the Security Council tried to pass a resolution to solve the situation in Gaza, to hasten the delivery of construction materials and to prevent arms smuggling, the Palestinian president dragged his feet, obstructed the process and eventually rejected the proposition altogether. In the year since the conflict ended, the Palestinian Authority has prioritized its internal political needs over the needs of its people. Time and again, it has put obstacles in the way of reconstruction efforts, while refraining from participating in the process.

These days we mark the tenth anniversary of the disengagement of Israel from Gaza. Israel left Gaza in 2005, with the hope that it would be transformed into a successful model of peace and prosperity. Over 9,000 Israeli citizens were evacuated from their homes. The steps taken by Israel, intended to advance peace, were not reciprocated. Since then, 15,000 rockets have been fired at our cities and our citizens. In 2007, Hamas turned Gaza into a terrorist base from which to attack Israel, using the people of Gaza as human shields.

Last summer, Hamas dragged Israel in yet another round of violence. Hamas fired more than 4,500 rockets towards Israel, during the period of Operation Protective Edge, putting 70 per cent of the Israeli population under the threat of rockets and mortars. Hamas turned residential areas, hospitals, schools, mosques

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and United Nations facilities into rocket-launching locations, firing positions for snipers and weapon caches, and turned the cellars of those buildings into entrances for their terror tunnels. By hiding behind and using its civilian population to attack another civilian population, Hamas committed a double war crime.

Time and again, Hamas broke humanitarian ceasefires initiated by Israel, ignoring the hardship to civilians on both sides. When Hamas agreed to a ceasefire, rather than rehabilitating the civilian infrastructure in Gaza, it announced that it planned to invest resources in the rehabilitation and improvement of its damaged military infrastructure. Over the past few months, Hamas has intensified its efforts to repair its network of terror tunnels, using cement and other materials that were intended for the reconstruction of destroyed homes.

Unfortunately, some members of the Council are not interested in discussing the situation based on the facts. While refraining from mentioning Hamas in the concept paper provided for the meeting in New York, Malaysia does not hesitate to support the terrorist organization on the ground. Hamas trains terrorists on Malaysian soil, with the full knowledge of the Malaysian authorities. Hamas terrorists were recruited and sent to Malaysia for week-long parachute training, in preparation for a cross-border kidnapping attack in Israel.

The support provided by a Council member to Hamas is a threat to international peace and security and an obstacle to the resumption of peace negotiations and to the improvement of the lives of those that Malaysia claims to care about.

Any discussion of the conditions on the ground in Gaza must include a full account of the reasons for the situation in Gaza. On the one hand, Hamas is more interested in warfare against Israelis than in the welfare of its own people, and on the other hand, the Palestinian Authority drags its feet with regard to the reconstruction of Gaza and neglects its responsibility to people of Gaza. Evading discussion of the responsibility of those parties for the situation in Gaza is an evasion of the truth.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Ron **Prosor**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative